



## TIP OF THE SPEAR

### CORPS' LEADERS ADDRESS END OF COMBAT EXCLUSION POLICY



Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta recently announced the end of the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule excluding women from assignment to units and positions whose primary mission is to engage in direct ground combat. The Marine Corps' top leaders said the policy change will not lower the standards required to be a part of combat units. "As our Corps moves forward with this process, our focus will remain on combat readiness and generating combat-ready units while simultaneously ensuring



maximum success for every Marine," said Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps. "The talent pool from which

we select our finest warfighters will consist of all qualified individuals, regardless of gender." **Read more**

**Also Read: End of Combat Exclusion Doesn't Mean Lower Standards**



## VIDEO OF THE WEEK

Since 1918, women have been an integral part of the Marine Corps and for the past 11 years of fighting, have proven themselves worthy in the face of the enemy. Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps Micheal P. Barrett addresses the recent lifting of the 1994 Combat Exclusion Policy and assures Marines that this will not affect mission accomplishment or lower standards.



## IN THE NEWS

## AFGHAN-LED OPERATION CLEARS INSURGENT STRONGHOLD



Afghan National Security Forces, aided by 18 Marine advisors, engaged multiple enemy forces Jan. 16 -19 during Operation New Hope in Kajaki, Afghanistan. The operation's mission was to bring peace, stability and increase the central government's influence in the area. Afghan National Army soldiers led the main assault, marking a milestone in their ability to plan, implement and coordinate a large-scale operation primarily independent of American forces. During the three-day operation, the group cleared weapons caches, improvised explosive devices and enemy fighting positions from the area. [Read more](#)

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## OSPREYS FLY IN THE PHILIPPINES



Three MV-22B Osprey aircraft with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 265 (VMM- 265) based out of Okinawa, Japan, arrived in the Philippines Jan. 22 to conduct bilateral training with elements of the Philippine Air Force. The training includes low-altitude flights, ground control, interoperability and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations. The Osprey takes off and lands like a helicopter but flies like an airplane, capable of reaching high-speed and high-altitude flight. "We appreciate the Marines coming here to train with us and are glad to host and support them at our base" said Tech. Sgt. Edwin Agang of the Philippine Air Force. [Read more](#)

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## BLACK SEA ROTATIONAL FORCE PRACTICES EMBASSY REINFORCEMENT



Marines and Sailors with Easy Company from Black Sea Rotational Force 2013 (BSRF-13) conducted their first embassy reinforcement mission rehearsal exercise Jan. 7-11 at Camp Lejeune, N.C. The training consisted of dry and practice runs, culminating in an evaluation of their response to crowds and riots. About 40 role players stood in a crowd screaming at the Marines in the simulated embassy as six role players attacked the embassy. The Marines and Sailors of BSRF-13 are preparing

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to deploy as the U.S.'s crisis contingency force in Eastern Europe. [Read more](#)

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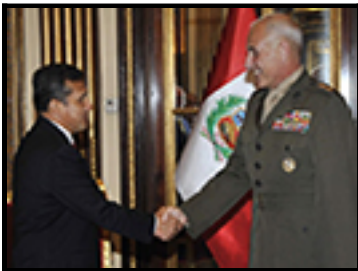
## MARINE READINESS KEY IN UPCOMING DEFENSE REVIEW



Maj. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie reaffirmed the Corps' commitment to readiness as a top priority Jan. 22 to a panel of policy experts in Washington, D.C. The meeting was part of McKenzie's duty as the representative of the Marines in the upcoming Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), a congressionally-mandated assessment of Defense Department strategies and priorities for a four-year period. He stressed that even as the service faces a manpower drawdown and fiscal uncertainty, the Corps remains the force that can respond quickly in times of combat and humanitarian assistance. [Read more](#)

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## SOUTHCOM COMMANDER: COOPERATION VITAL IN CONFRONTING THREATS



The top U.S. military officer at U.S. Southern Command, Marine Corps Gen. John F. Kelly, is reaching out to partners in the region to emphasize the importance of cooperation among nations directly to America's south. Kelly, who assumed command Nov. 19, recently returned from a two-day visit to Peru, where he met with country officials to explore ways of strengthening the countries' military partnership. The visit followed one conducted earlier this month to Honduras and El Salvador, where the discussions centered on ways to more closely combat organized crime, drug trafficking and other transnational threats. [Read more](#)

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## PROFILE: A GENERAL TOUGH ENOUGH TO SMILE



Lt. Gen. John Toolan is known for being one of the few Marine officers who beams broadly in one of his official portraits. But the new commanding



general of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force headquartered at Camp Pendleton doesn't have to try to look tough. Standing over six feet tall, he speaks in a gravelly voice and has a "teeth-baring grimace that should be on a Marine Corps recruiting poster." He also has a combat-tested resume to match the formidable appearance. [Read more](#)

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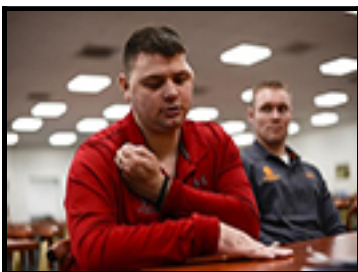
## FRONT LINES TO THE FRONT OFFICE: MARINES DRILL EXECS



A group of executives recently visited Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., for a three-day course to learn ethical leadership from combat leaders. The executives were issued weapons and carry packs, and put in scenarios inspired by real conflicts troops faced while deployed. The stakes are rarely as high in business as they are in war, where lives are at risk 24/7. The military has proved itself uniquely qualified in teaching ethics, where retaining normal values is more difficult amid the chaos of war. [Read more](#)

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## WOUNDED WARRIORS RETURN TO GERMANY TO PUT THE PUZZLE TOGETHER, EXPRESS GRATITUDE



Sgt. Burness L. Britt and Staff Sgt. Joseph Danes visited the intensive care unit at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Landstuhl, Germany Jan. 25 to piece together parts of their past they can't always remember. Britt and Danes were both in a coma when they came to the center and their chances of survival were slim. An improvised bomb gashed Britt's carotid artery in Afghanistan in June 2011 (he later suffered a stroke), and Danes was crushed under a truck in a rollover in Iraq in 2005. The men expressed their deep gratitude for the medical staff who saved their lives. [Read more](#)

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## FORMER USO PERFORMER DEPLOYS TO AFGHANISTAN





Three years ago, Cpl. Rocio Sanchez was entertaining troops in Iraq with her vocals as a member of the United Service Organizations (USO). Not long after, she traded in her high heels for combat boots and now serves in the Marine Corps as an electronic key management systems clerk at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan. She joined the Marine Corps Delayed Entry Program in 2009, making the formal transition after a two-week USO tour in Iraq. Although it's not the most common transition, Sanchez is respected by her fellow Marines and still entertains them with her voice from time to time. [Read more](#)



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

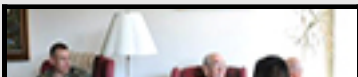
### JANUARY 27, 1778

Marines landed at New Providence, Bahamas and flew the American flag over foreign soil for the first time.

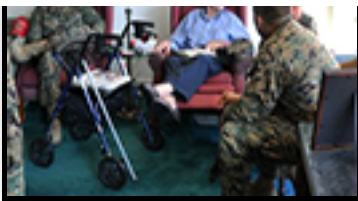


## SEMPER FI

### MARINES AID BURGLARIZED WWII VET



Marines rushed to the aid of 93-year-old World War II veteran Elbert Wood whose home was defaced by a pair of teen burglars in Houston, Texas



Jan. 21. "It's important that he knows we're here for him and that we're always his brothers," Maj. Roberto Rodriguez said. The presence of the local Marines was just part of the outpouring of support for Wood, as calls came in from around the country. Former Marines and strangers offered to paint the graffiti-laden walls, replace the damaged household items and donate furniture. [Read more](#)

## OUR MISSION

*In the words of Lt. Gen. Victor H. "Brute" Krulak, "The United States does not need a Marine Corps... the United States wants a Marine Corps." As America's Expeditionary Force in Readiness, the Marine Corps is deployed across the globe, standing ready to respond to any crisis. The Marine Corps Connection is your one-stop source for the latest Marine Corps news and is published weekly by the Division of Public Affairs at Headquarters Marine Corps. **Stay connected to your Marines!***



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